NEW MEMBERS.

The following members took the oath and signed the rolls :—

1. Mr. C. Kumara Das (*Secretary to Government*)
2. Dr. H. Parameswaran (*Director of Industries*)

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PRESIDENT.

PRESIDENT : Order, order. I have received the following letter from the Private Secretary to His Highness the Maharaja :—

> "I have laid before His Highness the Maharaja the motion of felicitation passed at the meeting of the Sri Mulam Assembly rendering their respectful congratulations on the conferment of the title of G. C. S. I. I am commanded by His Highness to convey to the Assembly through you His Highness' sincere thanks for the same."

I am glad to be able to announce that in response to the telegram and representations from this Government, an additional quota of 150 bales of yarn for fishermen have since been allotted by the Government of India.

ELECTION TO THE TEXTILE ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

In the election of a member to the Central Textile Advisory Committee held yesterday evening under the chairmanship of the Deputy President, Mr. G. Parameswaran Pillai secured the largest number of votes. He is therefore declared elected as a member of the Committee.

I have received notices of the following adjournment motions :—

(1) I move that the business of the House be adjourned to discuss a definite matter of urgent importance, *viz.*, the serious labour situation created at Quilon in consequence of the arrest of Mr. N. Srikantan Nair and some other labour leaders.

Statement: A phonocom message was received by the leader of the State Congress party at 3 a. m. on 23-6-1121 to the following effect:— The cashewnut factory and the workers in the H & C. factory at Quilon had struck work at Quilon. Mr. Srikantan Nair was asked to withdraw picketing in the cashewnut factory. He denied responsibility for strike. The authorities suspecting him to be responsible, arrested him at noon on 23-6-1121. There is hartal everywhere in Quilon and the situation is very serious.

This is from Mr. G. Parameswaran Pillai.

(2) I beg leave to move the adjournment of the business of the House to discuss a matter of urgent public importance, namely, the serious situation created by the labour strikes and arrests in twenty-four factories in the Quilon town and vicinity and the consequent unemployment of more than twenty thousand labourers.

This is from Mr. V. Gangadharan Nair.

(3) I beg to move that the business of this House be adjourned to discuss a matter of urgent public importance, *viz.*, the situation that has arisen due to the strike of the labourers in the cashewnut factories of Quilon.

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[President]

This is from Mr. K. Balakrishna Menon.

(4) I move that the business of the House be adjourned to discuss a specific matter of urgent public importance, namely, the situation caused by widespread labour strike at Quilon.

Statement. We have received wires from Quilon to the effect that a serious situation has been created in Quilon by the striking of work by cashewnut factory workers and workers in many other factories. The leaders of labour there have been arrested. The whole situation is tense and causes anxiety to the public.

This is from Mr. A. P. Udayabhanu.

(5) I wish to move an adjournment of the business of the House to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, 'The deteriorating situation in food and other commodities of consumption and the failure of the Government to deal with the matter effectively.

This is from Mr. K. K. Chellappan Pillai.

(6) I wish to move for an adjournment of the business of the House to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, 'the attitude of the Government towards civil liberties as evidenced by the recent arrests including yesterday's arrest at Quilon and bans, and its failure to provide the background for the effective operation of the right of adult suffrage, newly granted.'

This is also from Mr. K. K. Chellappan Pillai.

I must rule all the adjournment motions out of order, for under the rules none of them can be moved. If the honourable members will turn to page 21 of the Assembly Manual they will find that "the right to move the adjournment of either chamber for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance shall be subject to the following restrictions, *viz.*, (1) not more than one such motion shall be made at the same sitting;" etc.

There is an adjournment motion tabled for today and therefore no other adjournment motion is permissible. The same rule applies to the House of Commons and from May's Parliamentary Practice, 13th edition, page 247, it will be seen that no more than one adjournment motion can be taken up at the same sitting of the House. On that ground I have no other alternative except to disallow all these adjournment motions but having regard to the importance of the questions indicated there, I propose to deal with the whole subject.

What the Government have received is as follows: The labourers of Harrisons & Crosfield struck work on 4-2-1946 from 7-30 A. M. following the decision of the Action Council of the factory workers union held last night, i. e., on the 3rd. The labourers shouted slogans inside the factory for about 15 minutes and left the factory. The slogans were the ten emergent needs of the workers, which they had already submitted to the company management in the factory memorandum.

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I would pause here for a moment and point out that the slogans were in respect of ten definite demands submitted by the workers to the management of Harrisons & Crosfield. A negative reply was received by the labourers. There are about 300—360 workers in the saw mill department and about 650--700 in the tile works and about 350 in the engineering department. The total workers on strike is about 1,400. Volunteers numbering about 50 have been enlisted and are standing at the factory gates. The meeting of the labourers was held soon after the strike commenced. Mr. T. P. Gopalan presided. About 800 labourers attended the meeting. M. K. Bhaskaran read out the printed memorandum. M. Ramakrishnan, T. K. Divakaran and A. K. Narayanan addressed the meeting. They spoke about the circumstances which led to the strike. They exhorted the labourers to behave peacefully and to abide by the directions of the Action Council, and that no worker should go to the factory gate without the orders of the Action Council.

Now this is a dispute between Harrisons & Crosfield workers and the management, relating to ten demands made by the workers, to the management. The workers of Thomas Stephen's tile works have absolutely no connection with Harrisons & Crosfield or the ten demands put up by the workers of Harrisons & Crosfield to the management of their company.

The workers of Thomas Stephen Company, (Tile Works,) Quilon, numbering about 400 struck work from 1 P. M. today. They all left the factory leaving about 10 volunteers at the tile factory gate.

We have no information as to whether at the same time that the general demands were put forward by the labourers of Harrisons & Crosfield, the tile factory also put forward the same demands and whether simultaneously they had to go out or whether it was a kind of sympathetic strike like the one which the United States are now experiencing.

The workers of the Cashewnut Factories *viz.*, Shanmukha Vilas (three factories), M. P. Govindan & Sons (two factories), M. P. Kesavan (two factories), E. C. Govindan Asan's(one factory), K. Velayudhan Pillai & Sons (one factory), Majid Boys' (one factory), P. Narayanan & Sons (one factory), situated in and around Quilon town also struck work from 4-2-1946 onwards. The strikes in the above factories were started by a batch of volunteers who went round all the factories. The volunteers were constituted by the Cashewnut Workers' Union Office-bearers and workers from other factories also.

The volunteers went to the above factories and shouted through a megaphone and made the workers in the above factories go out on strike. This is the position which has come to the notice of the Government. I want to make it absolutely clear that Government will not hesitate to employ all the possible means in their hands and utilise all the powers vested in them under the law for the purpose of preventing this kind of indiscriminate and general strike. They will not hesitate

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[President.]

to use any kind of legal weapon in their power for the purpose of getting rid of this mentality that because certain definite demands of the workers of Harrisons & Crosfield have not been satisfied by the management, the tile factory of Thomas Stephen and the Cashewnut factory of somebody else should strike work. England and America may afford to indulge in this kind of wholesale, indiscriminate and sympathetic strikes but we, in view of our present industrial position and other future possibilities, cannot possibly afford to tolerate it, and whatever the policy anywhere else, I may say that this Government are determined to prevent sympathetic or universal or general strikes of this nature. Those persons who are directly or indirectly responsible for inciting people to strike work in one factory because the demands in another factory, wholly extraneous to this factory, are not conceded, will be proceeded against under the law.

But there is one important matter to be remembered in this connection. This is a time when the managements should realise that labour is assuming a predominant position not only in this country but in the world at large. They must realise that new demands, new desires, new impulses have come into the labour movement. This Government, in cases where there is a dispute between a particular management and the workers under that management, have taken the line that as far as possible they would be favourably disposed towards the claims of labour and would use the necessary suasion and compulsion where need be on the management to see that labour is treated fairly. It was and is in pursuance of this policy that the Government have recently inaugurated a labour department and put at the head of it Mr. V. K. Velayudhan, a distinguished member of this Honourable House who has recently been trained in England and in regard to whose work in England this Government have received very good recommendation from the people in charge of the trade unions in England. Another Officer—Mr. M. O. Varghese—has also been appointed to assist him, and his general knowledge of economics and of labour conditions is extensive. He is also going to be trained. He has already had some training but that training is going to be supplemented. In addition, Mr. P. N. Krishna Pillai, who was one of the labour leaders of the State has also been chosen as another officer and he has been already installed in office and steps will be taken to implement what this Government said, *viz.*, that he will also be trained in trade union methods in England. This Government are, therefore, wholly sympathetic to the legitimate demands of labour. If there is a dispute that arises between management A and the workers of that management A, Government will use their good offices for the purpose of procuring better terms for the workers. They will utilise the machinery of the labour department and other Government machinery for the purpose of redressing the grievances and advancing the interests of labour. But if

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labour, insensitive to this aspect of the matter, considers that overawe-ing or bullying not only one management but managements and capitalists as a whole, by starting a sympathetic or general or universal strike, is the proper thing to do, then, as I said, Government will have to take and will not flinch from taking, every step necessary to prevent that deleterious state of things which, I would appeal to this Honour-able House to consider, will lead to a serious industrial deterioration in the State.

There is one more matter to which I must refer. That again is a result of what a newspaper has said which has been placed in my hands. This Government have till now taken the line that ecclesias-tics from outside should be freely permitted to come to the State and be given the hospitality and the courtesy of the State for the purpose of ventilating their legitimate grievances, if there are grievances, in connection with the primary education question and so forth. This Government, therefore, have not sought to prevent any Bishop or Archbishop or any other ecclesiastical dignitary from outside the State coming and presiding over meetings here or taking part in such meet-ings. But it is found now that those ecclesiastics, forgetful of the obligations of their holy office, forgetful of the obligations of courtesy between State and State and State and Province come here and take part in meetings destined for political ends. In order therefore to reinforce what I have stated, let me say this. I have already moved the Govern-ment of India to see that these ecclesiastics do not come to the State just for the purpose of starting political agitation in the State. That matter is now being taken up by the Government of India, but even before the Government of India deal with that matter, I must state definitely that if a Bishop from outside transcends his functions as an ecclesiastic and as a religious personage and takes part in purely political agita-tions here, he will be treated in no better and no different position than anybody else. Apparently there has been a certain amount of en-couragement given to them by the comparative quiet which followed the Bishop of Changanacherry's 'atom bomb' statement. Proceedings could have been taken against him under the law, but this Government deliberately resolved not to take any action against him on account of his holy office and also because they had heard that he was not wholly responsible for the matter which was put before him and which he signed. That may have been a right report or wrong report, but they did not want to take any legal action against him. But that seems to have been construed as a sign of nervousness or fear on the part of the Government apparently, and the ecclesiastics from outside have been coming here and taking part not in the educational controversy—if that has been the case, there would have been absolutely no restriction placed upon them and they would have been allowed to do so—but in so many other matters not falling within their jurisdiction. What happened? Let me read to you the following:—"A conference of the Christians was held at Kanjirapalli with Rt. Rev. P. Thomas, D. D., Bishop of Banga-lore, in the Chair. About 10,000 persons including 50 priests and 200

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women attended. K. T. Michael, M. L. A., in his welcome speech said that the Government are not giving permission for erecting churches and cemeteries to Christians." That is a deliberate falsehood. "He opined that that present agricultural income tax is harmful to Christians." The Bishop of Bangalore, presiding over a meeting in Kanjirapalli for the purpose of discussing the levy and incidence of agricultural income tax and listening quietly to the wholly mendacious and flagrantly false statement that the agricultural income tax is something aimed at the Christians! As a matter of fact the planters affected by this tax are mainly Christians, of whom I see a distinguished representative before me, and they have no quarrels. There were seventeen resolutions passed at the meeting. Mr. K. M. Chandy moving resolution No. 1, said :—said "You all know Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar came first to Travancore in connection with the Trust Fund case. The wolf which came to lick the blood of the christian flock has now entered into the midst of the flock and is repressing them. In olden days Christians used to go to Mylapore on pilgrimage to visit the tomb of St. Thomas. You should resume that pilgrimage which was stopped during the past many years and pray to St. Thomas for the removal of this religious oppressor from Travancore."

Verbatim reports of the proceedings of that meeting are being transmitted to the Government of India and the Government of India are going to be requested to declare whether a Bishop is entitled to come into a State and take part in a meeting for the purpose of dealing with the Anti-dowry Bill, the oppression of C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, the agricultural income tax and so forth. What is there to prevent some leader, say, T. P. Velayudhan Pillai, from going to Bangalore and starting criticism of all that the Mysore Government have done, or going somewhere else and starting criticism, say on the position of Hindus in Hyderabad? The whole question of the comity and friendship between Province and Province and between State and State is involved in this matter, and I wish to make it very definite that if it is found that anybody, however exalted in his ecclesiastical rank he may be, takes part in political meetings of this kind, steps will be taken not to differentiate him from the humblest subject of His Highness or the humblest visitor to the State That is a matter on which there should be no distinction between man and man. If a person, forgetting the responsibility of his holy office, enters into politics, it is a mistake. Certainly, churches have suffered in the past for having entered into politics. I make an appeal to the Catholic community again. This is not the way in which any agreement or compromise can be effected. If anybody thinks that by the Bishop of Bangalore or by the Bishop of any other place coming and making these speeches and presiding over meetings this Government can be cowed or bullied

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into accepting the demands which they will not otherwise feel convinced to accept, he is very much mistaken, and I hope that a community so well situated in every respect, so highly educated and so well-fitted for playing a great part in the future of this country will realise that all that they want and more can be achieved by the adoption of constitutional methods and by approaching the Government in the right way without attempting to get the adventitious aid of these ecclesiastics at large who are wandering about. I should have thought that any person, not to mention a person in the Bishop's place who heard the speech "of the wolf which came to lick the blood of the christian flock" would have said something to dissociate himself from such a speech. If a Bishop trained in the traditions and the discipline of one of the greatest men and avatars of the world, is so unequal to his responsibilities as the preacher of the gospel of love and of equality and stands still when such things are said, he is unworthy of his position and I say so deliberately.

I find that in the 'Deepika' to which a certain reference was made yesterday, there is a reference to this 'Christianstan.' The Deepika will be asked to show cause why the usual editorial privileges should not be removed from it. I strongly deprecate such kinds of statements?

MR. K. A. MATHEW: May I solicit an information from the Chair.

PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: May I know whether it is a fact that the Head of the Administration has tried to secure opinions from leaders of thought outside Travancore regarding the questions that are engaging the attention of the people of Travancore such as education, constitutsonal reforms etc.?

PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: In the light of the facts, what is the objection of the ecclesiastics who are interested in the flock here in giving their views?

PRESIDENT: Order, order. I have explained the matter and it is not open to discussion. The analogy is wholly irrelevant. Here is a constitution which is promulgated and the opinion of leaders of thought, on a matter which is not only of local importance but of all India importance, has been obtained. If the Bishop of Bangalore has stated his opinion as to the primary education policy, it would have been all right. But he has absolutely no right to speak on the Anti-dowry Bill and such other matters. No doubt any man has a right to say anything but if we consider that he is starting a subversive agitation within the State—I have no hesitation in saying that the action of the Bishop of Bangalore in presiding over the meeting and where such statements are made which are bound to be subversive to the peace of the country, is wrong—he is liable under the law to be proceeded against, and the question is whether such action will be taken now or later. I have given the warning. I do not want to take action now,

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[President]

but I have given the warning that any further action of this kind will render those people responsible to the ordinary process of law. I am not for a moment canvassing Mr. Mathew's statements. It is open, if the Bishop of Bangalore so decides from Bangalore or even here, to say that "in my opinion Sry. T. Narayani Amma is thoroughly wrong" or "in my opinion Ramaswami Aiyar is the wolf which licked the blood of the sheep." The question has been fulminating in the past and the history of the 12th and 13th centuries is known to some of us, but if an ecclesiastic comes into the State, presides over a meeting where speeches are made and resolutions are passed which are against the law, the fact that an *ecclesiastic* is presiding will not make any difference.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: Is it because he is an ecclesiastic? I do not understand the difference.

PRESIDENT: I am only saying "with regard to anybody from outside." Supposing the Governor of Madras came here and presided over such meetings as the present one, he would have been doing things which were illegitimate and the necessary diplomatic steps will be taken to prevent the Governor of Madras from doing so. All that I said was that the Bishop of Bangalore is not entitled by virtue of his office to make such statements.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: May I know whether it is right on the part of the Government to secure the opinion of leaders of thought in British India like Sastri or others about the educational question or political and constitutional questions? What is the difference between the two? I cannot understand.

PRESIDENT: The House will now proceed with the next item of business.

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: While submitting to the ruling given by the President regarding the adjournment motion, I wish to say that I had given two adjournment motions one with regard to civil liberty...

PRESIDENT: Order, order. Under the law by which we are bound, no more than one such motion can be discussed at the same sitting. Mr. Velayudhan Pillai has given an adjournment motion in respect of rubber. That is going to be discussed today at 3·30 P. M. and therefore no other motion for adjournment can be discussed.

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: I may be allowed to explain because the food situation is grave.

PRESIDENT: When the law prohibits more than one motion to be discussed at the same sitting, how can any explanation by the honourable member make any difference?

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: Not with regard to the adjournment motion but with regard to the steps being taken, because it is a serious situation regarding food.

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PRESIDENT: I am surprised at the honourable member. If there is perhaps any one locality in India which is not suffering from difficulty about food, it is Travancore. There is a terrible famine in Mysore with the result that the Dewan of Mysore has found it necessary to start by air the day after tomorrow for Washington. The honourable Sir Srivastava is taking a large number of people, non-officials and others-the congress party has declined to go with him—to London and to New York to ask for more food. We know on the other hand-I do not want to proclaim it so much because we might be asked to give more help to other provinces—that we have sufficient stock to keep us going. The only locality in India today which is safe in regard to the food situation is Travancore. There was a time when we had to beg for food from everywhere but at present other localities are getting some food from us. As Ceylon was in a desperate position, we have loaned some rice to them on condition that they should return it as soon as they got their own share, as the first charge. Similarly the Madras Presidency has gone through very difficult times and we have lent some rice to them on the same condition. At present, when we are in this position, if we go through the same policy that we pursued last year and the year before the last we shall be able, without unduly curtailing our rations, to keep on—I do not make a promise as to that because the world situation is very bad and we may have to reduce our rations, but there is no risk of starvation in this country—so much so that the Government have not considered it necessary to ask for more food than what has already been allotted to them. What has been allotted to this State is roughly 85 thousand tons from Sind and 20 thousand tons from Madras. The Tanjore district is in a bad position, and therefore, the Government of Madras are making some representations to this Government. But we are in a definite position to say that we shall have 1,05,000 tons of rice over and above the procured rice, which will roughly give us not less than about 75 to 80 per cent of the rations that we have already had. So this is the only place in India where we are not in danger of any food crisis. But Mr. Chellappan Pillai wants.....

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: I want to make a statement.

PRESIDENT: You cannot make a statement. Your adjournment motion is disallowed. So what is the statement that you can make?

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: About the actual situation.

PRESIDENT: That is out of order. As I said, however important the matter may be according to the honourable member, it is covered by my ruling. The Standing Orders are binding upon us.

MR. S. SANKARANARAYANAN TAMPI: I may be permitted to say a few words with regard to the situation at Quilon. I have simply to correct the information which has reached here.

The Dewan observed, in the course of his statement, that in the Cashewnut factories we are conducting a strike as a sort of sympathetic gesture.

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PRESIDENT : Order, order. I cannot possibly allow discussion on that matter now. This is a report which has reached me just two hours ago. I am perfectly prepared to admit that it is possible that the report is inaccurate. I have known inaccurate reports being sent to me. If the honourable member will kindly let me have a note pointing out where the inaccuracy is and if he will do me the honour of seeing me on the question, I will make enquiries. At this juncture, when, as a matter of fact, one million and a quarter people are on strike in the United States—we incidentally, are suffering from it because some of the machinery we have ordered from America are not coming—one naturally cannot keep quiet when a strike situation threatens. The report on which I have made my statement is one which I have read. If it is wrong, and if the honourable member can correct me, I will make the correction as readily and as openly as I have made the statement.

MR. S. SANKARANARAYANAN TAMPI : I would just correct the report.

PRESIDENT : No.

MR. S. SANKARANARAYANAN TAMPI : I would also request you to correct the responsible statement made in the House.

PRESIDENT : Yes, but the House is not meeting after to-day. I will make the statement to the other House.

NON-OFFICIAL LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS.

THE TRAVANCORE ANTI-DOWRY BILL.

MR. A. P. UDAYABHANU : Yesterday I was trying to point out that this Bill is not meant to serve its purpose. There is some attempt in clauses 3 and 4 to prevent the giving of dowry. In clause 3, it is stated that gifts that are voluntarily and spontaneously given out of love and natural affection could extend up to an amount of Rs. 1,000. But if it is given out of natural love and affection, I do not understand why the amount should be restricted to Rs. 1,000.

But the most appalling things are in Clauses 7, 8 and 9. In Clause 7 it is given that only 'Travancore residents shall be qualified to point out the offence under this Bill. And Clause 8 wants a tribunal to be set up to examine the offence. It is also laid down that the cost of the tribunal shall be borne by the party found to be at fault. So the unfortunate man who fails to prove his case will have to pay the cost. Then again the cost will be tremendous because a special tribunal has to be set up and the whole thing will have to be dealt with in camera. All things considered, this Bill is not seriously meant. It is purely for advertisement purpose, because in all these proceedings, the possible culprit is sufficiently safeguarded. The Bill gives to the man who takes it into his head to point out a culprit, this warning that, 'you shall not dare to point out him because you will be held responsible if you do not successfully prove your case. So this is only a propaganda stunt and nothing more. It is a futile Bill, it has no value, it is of no use.

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